



**Minutes of the
ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY BOARD
November 8, 2006**

The regular meeting of the Alameda Free Library Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Karen Butter, President
Ruth Belikove, Vice President
Alan Mitchell, Board Member
Leslie Krongold, Board Member
Mark Schoenrock, Board Member

Absent: None

Staff: Jane Chisaki, Library Director
Marsha Merrick, Recording Secretary

CONSENT CALENDAR

An asterisk indicates items so enacted and adopted on the Consent Calendar.

- A. *Report from Library Director highlighting Library Department activities for the month of November 2006. Accepted.
- B. *Draft Minutes of the Regular Library Board meeting of October 11, 2006. Approved.
- C. *Library Services Report for the month of September 2006. Accepted.
- D. *Report from Finance Department reflecting FY 2005-06 Library expenditures (by fund) through October 2006. Accepted.
- E. *Bills for ratification. Approved.

Board President Butter requested that Director Chisaki make a notation on the Library Services Report for the month of September 2006 which highlights the anomalies in the data due to the Main Library closure. Director Chisaki will do so for future reference purposes. President Butter inquired about the space rental in the budget, and Director Chisaki confirmed that there will be no more budget activity in that area.

Board President Butter asked for a motion to accept the Consent Calendar as presented. Board Member Mitchell so moved; Vice President Belikove seconded the motion which carried by a 5-0 vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Selection of Art for the New Main Library (J. Chisaki)

Director Chisaki spoke about accepting donations of art for the public areas. Guidelines should be established first. A memo was circulated from J.S. May, the Foundation's fundraiser consultant, which helped formulate the plan for the Gala Fundraiser. The opinion was, if someone makes an offer of a donation (an item as opposed to cash), apply these four questions as the criteria and if you respond yes to each question, the donation should be appropriate. Is there a need for the gift? Is there a location for the proposed gift? Will the donor cover the full costs for the item? In other words, if there are ongoing operational costs, would the endowment provide support for these future expenses? Does the donor understand that the final design control exists with the projects leadership?

Board Member Krongold inquired if the Board would be asked to consider the gifts. Director Chisaki welcomed this as she would not want to be the sole selection authority. President Butter thought the questions were good; however, a process would need to be established first. Member Schoenrock asked if there could be a space reserved not for a gift, but for rotational purposes for local artists. Director Chisaki stated she was going to ask the Alameda Museum if they had some items the Library could display on a rotational basis as well. Vice President Belikove believed it was important to consider the fact that the City has innumerable good artists who have no venue. Belikove went on to say if you're going to select art it could be to our advantage to have someone who knows something about art to sit on the committee. The committee could consist of a mixture of board and community members as well as artists or an art consultant. Vice President Belikove said that many museums lend art to be displayed and that the Oakland Museum might be an excellent source. Board Member Krongold mentioned art security as a pertinent issue as well.

President Butter asked Director Chisaki to contact some of the other libraries in the area and see what their policies might be in respect to public art display. This item will be moved to unfinished business for more discussion at the December meeting.

B. Alameda Free Library Foundation (A. Mitchell)

Board Member Mitchell expressed his concern prior to the Gala event, but was very pleased at how it all came together in the end.

Board President Butter mentioned that she had talked to Jephtha Boone of the Foundation and requested that he come to the January meeting to give the Board an

update on donation status, etc. Director Chisaki indicated that Sylvia Kahn was now the Foundation President, so she should probably be the one to speak to the Board. Chisaki said that 346 tickets were sold for the Gala and \$26,075 was collected. Total expenses have not been calculated, so the final net figure is not yet available; this will be disclosed at a future date. A lot of donations were made the night of the Gala with the \$100 shelves being the most popular item.

Board President Butter inquired as to how much of that money would go to the Library. Director Chisaki responded that it would build the endowment which in turn would be used for the Library when it had a future need.

The cleaning done before the Grand Opening was discussed; Director Chisaki said the Foundation was only willing to pay half. The Library originally requested 1 day of professional cleaning and ended up getting 2 ½ days for the same cost.

The Foundation would like to do an annual fundraising event at the Library, but Director Chisaki explained to them now that the Library is open, there wouldn't be the anticipation of the new building as a big draw. Additionally, there would not be an opportunity for day long set-up for the event; the Library is now open.

C. Friends of the Alameda Free Library (M. Skeen)

Friends President Skeen said there was a membership table set up for the first four days the Library was open and was happy to report they signed up 41 new members. These new volunteers were interested in helping with the book sales or in the Café. Café planning is moving along – they had hoped to be open the past Monday, however, the refrigerator and microwave had not arrived yet. Hopefully, they will be ready to open the Monday of Thanksgiving week. They have just enough people to cover the 12 shifts with 2 people each shift. The Friends would like to get a few more people who would be willing to be available on-call. Per Member Krongold's inquiry, Feel Good Bakery will be the pastry supplier for the Café.

D. Library Building Watch (M. Merrick)

Recording Secretary Merrick spoke about how busy things had been with preparing for the Library opening. Getting the Library Building Watch "out-the-door" requires several hours of work and that big a chunk of time has just not been available. Consequently, no issue was released in October. No promises were made for a November issue either, as things are still moving along at a very brisk pace. By December, Merrick expects the Library to be a little more established, and things will hopefully slow down a bit. The next issue that is released might include some sort of newsletter re-naming contest, as "Library Building Watch" is no longer so appropriate. Past issues may be displayed at the information desk with a sign-up sheet near-by to try to generate interest in receiving the newsletter.

E. Patron suggestions/comments (Speak-Outs) and Library Director's response.

Director Chisaki reported there had been no written speak-outs, but she has received a lot of nice compliments as she walks through the building.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA (Public Comment)

An audience member had several comments/observations about the new Library as follows: the big windows fully-lighted at night may be a security issue if someone outside sees you and decides to follow you when you leave the building; a remedy for this might be to put the magazine racks on wheels so they could be rolled in front of the windows at night. The children's area is right outside the Café and they could watch you as you are eating which could be disturbing. The lighted reading/work tables aren't lit all the way to the edges and give off a glare. If you are sitting with your back to the computers they give off a magnetic field and people don't want that. Board President Butter asked Director Chisaki to look into these issues.

LIBRARY BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Vice President Belikove spoke about volunteers in the Library, questioning if there would be a coordinator. Director Chisaki indicated that the Library would be recruiting for a full-time Library Technician, and one of their primary responsibilities would be volunteer coordination. Names and contact information of the people who gave their time at the opening events have been compiled and held on to for future volunteer opportunities. The Library is currently working on recruiting some high school students to come in and shelve books as the Library Aides can't keep up with the increased flow. The students could use this opportunity to do their community service hours.

Vice President Belikove questioned the position of the Library Board in the community. She would like to build some higher visibility thinking that some people don't even know there is a Board. An example was given that at the Gala, other various groups were represented on the stairs when the speeches were made, but no Library Board members. Belikove would like to reposition the board as a significant part of the community. Director Chisaki did not know who was going to speak until the day before the event. Admittedly, it was not a well-done speaking ceremony. She felt there were a lot of people unrepresented. When community meetings are held to discuss branch improvements, Director Chisaki expects the Board to take a big role in the decision-making process. Board Member Krongold brought up training the Board had received a couple years back on what their role/goals should be. She will look for her notes from that. President Butter suggested the issue be agendized for broader discussion at the December meeting.

Board Member Mitchell said that since we're not getting many complaints something must be going right. Board Member Krongold said that in a class she takes, she has overheard many positive comments herself from people that don't know she is a Library Board member. President Butter congratulated Director Chisaki and her staff for their successes.

President Butter would like to formally recognize the Friends of the Library for all the work they've done, perhaps as a resolution of appreciation. This could be prepared by the Board itself or perhaps by the City Council. The Board could ask the City Council to declare Friends of the Library Day. Director Chisaki said that in the last fiscal year, the Friends have given the Library almost \$100,000. Friends President Skeen will check to see when their anniversary is, and that might be an appropriate day to designate.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director Chisaki indicated that in the 4 ½ hours the Library was open, slightly less than 2,000 people came through the doors on Opening Day. Friday, almost 3,000 people came in and there were no special programs that day. A little more than 5,500 people came through on Saturday, which was Family Day. From Sunday through just before the board meeting an additional 13,000+ people had visited the Library. 650 new applications for Library cards had been received. Director Chisaki is hoping for the daily door count at the Main Library to settle to about 1,200 people a day.

The book drop signage is not in place yet. Signs have been taped on the front door directing people to put their items in the book drop on the wall, as opposed to bringing them inside to return them.

Eight different groups have been booked into our meeting spaces, and there are many more vying for their use. The Library is not prepared to allow room use during the hours we are not open yet, as staff would have to work extra hours at night and also be the only one in the building. The cost of an attendant is covered in the policy; the group using the room would be required to pay \$25 per hour. The attendant would probably be a Library Technician; they would have to be responsible for checking the building, setting the alarm and locking up when the group was finished.

The CALTAC Workshop, the Alameda Youth Collaborative, the Alameda Lupus Group, the Friends and Foundation, the Mayor's Conference and Becker Media have all been booked into the meeting rooms. The Alameda Art Association is also considering meeting here.

Board Member Krongold loved the wood rabbit sculpture in the children's area. Staff has been instructed to ensure there are always books on it, as it appears to be a staircase and the children are climbing all over it.

Honora Murphy may be hosting a fundraiser to get the additional art pieces funded, including the standing bronze sculpture for the lobby area, and a trellis that would go on the wall in the children's area. Both these pieces are by artist Michael Carey, and have not been commissioned yet.

The Board inquired about pictures taken at the dedication. There were a few photographers present, not all of them invited. In fact, Director Chisaki has already received a CD of pictures taken by a David Duffy - someone she did not know. The person that had been invited to take digital pictures was Patrick Tracy, and he is supposed to send in a CD. Stan

Bunger's brother, Craig Bunger, videoed the event, as did Frank Green from AP&T. He will send Director Chisaki a DVD, and also broadcast the event on the AP&T Alameda channel. Press releases had been sent to the Journal, the Sun, the Times Star, the Chronicle, several radio stations and all the television stations. It is unknown which of these groups actually showed up at the event. Stan Bunger gave a couple of plugs on KCBS in the morning before the ceremony.

Board Member Mitchell complimented both Director Chisaki and Board President Butter for the talks they gave. He thought they were excellent, succinct and to the point.

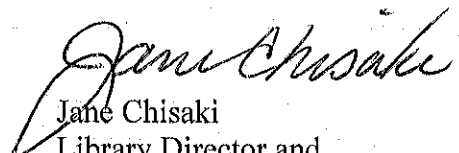
Director Chisaki mentioned that staff has worked incredibly hard to get the Library ready for this opening, and once it opened, they had been real troopers. The long hours that have been put in, and the lack of complaints have been amazing. Vice President Belikove inquired if there was anything the Board could do to honor the staff. This will be given some thought; suggestions are welcome. City Manager, Debra Kurita, will co-host a coffee and pastry event with Director Chisaki, to thank the staff for the successful opening as well. The branch staff also deserves recognition for carrying the load while the Main Library was closed, which was considerable.

Community meetings for branch improvements will probably be scheduled to begin in late January, once things are a little more settled. Councilmember Matarrese has a flyer out regarding this already, asking the community for ideas on what could be done to improve the branches.

ADJOURNMENT

Board President Butter called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m. Board Member Mitchell so moved, Board Member Krongold seconded the motion, and it was carried by a 5-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,


Jane Chisaki
Library Director and
Secretary to the Library Board

This meeting's agenda was posted 72 hours in advance in accordance with the Brown Act.